

174 80 miles of its bed in flood and boats being used in these seasonal
 133 (1) swamps. Carpenter feels that it was these wet lands south of the Feszan rather than the Niger that Stearchus spoke of to Herodotus. It seems reasonable to suppose that as these enormous wet lands dried up central Saharan speaking peoples followed the course of this retreat and moved slowly over the centuries into the Chad basin, or at least concentrated more densely in this geographically favourable area.

175 Until more historical and archeological research has been carried out, it would be wise to neglect some of the later writers' fanciful reconstructions and to concur with the ever careful Barth, in speaking of the first centuries of the Kanuri kingdom as its "silent beginnings". (2)

175 Most scholars are agreed that the rulers of Bornu embraced Islam somewhere
 177 around the end of the 11th century. El Bekri writing circa 1067 A.D. (3) speaks of the people of Kanem as idolators. However it is most likely that besides consulting merchants and travellers, he was consulting older (173) texts on the subject. The king lists all agree on the fact that Mai (king) Hume (1085-1097 A.D.) died in Egypt on the way to Mecca, and it is upon (4) this evidence that Islam is at present dated in Bornu.

(177) Urvoy feels that this contact with Islam brought with it the knowledge of expansionism, powerful monarchy, and the idea of tributaries. (5) Whether this is true, or whether Islam only enhanced tendencies already present is impossible to say at present. Whatever the answer, it is recorded that the son of the above mentioned Hume, Dunama I (1097-

1150 A.D.) expanded the little state of Kanem, northeast of Lake Chad, into

(1) Carpenter, Rhys, op.cit. p. 239.

(2) Barth, H. Travels in North and Central Africa, Vol.II (London) 1857, p. 643.

(3) El Bekri, quoted in Barth, H. op. cit., p. 634.

(4) Urvoy, Y. Chronologie du Bornu, Journal de la Société des Africanistes, 12, 2, 1942, pp. 271-289.

(5) Urvoy, Y. Histoire de l'Empire du Bornu, Mem. IFAN, 7, 1949, p.36